1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
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slayer is assimilating some of the courage and fierceness of his victim, though it must be remembered that the liver is regarded as the seat of fear as well as of these more warlike emotions, and, indeed, it is presumably by his very deficiency in these latter that the victim was unable to look after his liver.

The tabu on the flesh of the slain applies not only to the slayer but to his father, mother, and nearest relatives. If they were rash enough to partake, their genitalia would swell, their joints grow crooked, and their heads turn bald. (Though in the case of an old man, it was said that these results need not be feared.) In view of such alarming risks it seems likely that there was in the person of the slain something like infection to that of the slayer. Other details confirm this view. The Orokaiva has a lively dread of *baupeni* (or elephantiasis of the scrotum) and swelling of the joints—both of which afflictions are seen in the Division. The slayer immediately removed his *bo*, or perineal band, and wore a leaf or nothing until he reached home and could effect a change of clothing: this was a precaution against *baupeni*. If he had dispatched the victim with a club he would straightway change this for another man's: on no account would he *shoulder* the club that struck the fatal blow, for he would run a risk of a swollen or distorted shoulder-joint.

Again the slayer must perform certain rites and observe certain tabus. He must not drink pure water out of the river, but only that which has been stirred up and made muddy by the feet of a non-slayer. He must not eat taro cooked in the pot, but only that which has been roasted in the open fire. He must abstain from sexual intercourse. These restrictions lasted for a few days and then the slayer ate the same purificatory stew (*suna*) which is given to initiates at the end of their seclusion (see p. 193). Among the Binandele I witnessed a mock demonstration of a peculiar rite which immediately preceded the eating of the *suna*. The slayer climbs into a small tree which contains a nest of those large and aggressive insects commonly called 'green' ants. The tree should properly be of the kind called *Bobo*, which

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is always swarming with them. While he crouches in a fork of the tree, branches are broken and laid over him so that he is almost completely covered and thoroughly bitten. Having endured this for some time, he climbs down and eats the *suma*, steaming himself over the dish and sponging his joints with handfuls of the stewed leaves. Another rite (also performed at the end of the initiate's seclusion) was to break a coco-nut above the slayer and souse his head with the milk.

It seems likely that all these observances and tabus are in a sense not only purificatory but defensive. As a rule, informants have no explanation to offer, but I have been informed directly that they are meant to drive away the *asisi*, or spirit, of the slain man. In support of this view I may quote what W. N. Beaver has written: 'I am not disposed to the sole view that the killer is "unclean". It seems to me rather that rites are necessary to throw off the power of the ghost or ghosts of the slain. . . .'[1]

Adoption of the Victim's Name

There is a very common practice, already referred to in Chapter VII, which we may be tempted to associate with the same idea. This is the practice of adopting the name of the slain. A man, originally named Koga, for instance, has killed another named Amburi: henceforward he, the slayer, is known by the name of Amburi, the slain. This custom is very common, and has been noted by others, so that it is unnecessary to give a succession of examples. It does not follow that the slayer entirely abandons his original name, which, I am told, may still be used occasionally by his more immediate friends; but his ordinary name is certainly that which he has taken from his victim. When a warrior of distinction has accounted for a number of slain he does not take the name of each in turn, but continues, as a rule, to be known by that of the first. This, however, cannot be an invariable rule, for a certain Ehari of Wasida, who can name no less than seven victims of his own hand, is known by the

[1] 'The Use of Emblems or Insignia of Man-killing among the "Orokaiva" tribes of the Kumusi Division', *Annual Report*, 1918–19, p. 97.

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881 common articles of diet. Comparing five lists made in
262 different parts of the Division, I find that they all contain taro, pig, and coco-nut in common; three contain *Puga* and *Tauga*; two bread-fruit and a kind of banana; while the other ingredients are various, with the exception of *simbiri*, or croton, which occurs in four of the five lists.

881 The initiates gather round the dish of *suna* and bend over
264 it so as to be fumigated by the rising steam. They hold their
783 hands in the steam, and then withdrawing them massage their joints. They take handfuls of the hot leaves and apply them to their private parts, their hip-joints, their elbows, their arm-pits, &c. They end by eating the stew. The other villagers stand by, themselves partaking and sponging their bodies with the leaves. The *suna* is sometimes set out in a wooden dish (*teva*) and a hot stone placed in it to increase the volume of steam, while the initiates stooping over the dish may be covered with pandanus mats to give them something like a Turkish bath.

After partaking of the *suna* the initiate is at liberty to resume his full diet. (During the last two or three days he has eaten nothing but banana and sugar-cane.) But even so he must be cautious. Before passing him a piece of taro one of the elders will pass it under his legs—a queer precaution which appears again and again in Orokaiva ceremonies, either as a purification or as a prophylaxis. Having thus received the taro, the hungry initiate must nibble it only and put it aside for a while. Furthermore, he must not handle it, but convey it to his mouth on a piece of stick as a fork. If
[826] he should handle it and afterwards scratch his head the penalty would be the severe one of baldness.

Meaning and Purpose of the Ceremonies

881 *Initiation.* The actual occurrences of the initiation cycle having been described we are now in a position to discuss their meaning and purpose. We may begin by considering the initiation ceremony described on pp. 180–3. Laying special stress upon the fact that the terrifying threats of the spirits against the candidates are apparently averted by the

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In fine it may be argued that the seclusion, together with the purificatory rites at the end of it, aim (the one in a positive manner, the other in a negative or precautionary manner) at the physical perfection of the initiate.

I have never met with any native rationale for the *suna qua* ceremonial observance; but a very similar process is sometimes used in the treatment of sickness; and as the argument is in this case fairly clear it may throw some light upon the rite in general. A man who has for some time been suffering from headache and general pains submits himself to treatment called *jura*.[1] Various leaves (*Tebo, Hamanya, Bakimo, Haiva, Hamburi, Kore, Urga*, are the names of some of them—but there are many recipes for *jura*) are scraped and pounded in a wooden dish with coco-nut oil. The patient squats over it covering himself with a pandanus mat, a hot stone is slipped into the dish, and he sits in a cloud of steam. The only remarkable feature about the leaves used is that they all possess a more or less strong smell (*muna*), that of the *tebo* being in European nostrils nothing short of abominable.

Now it is a very common Orokaiva theory that sickness may be due to the immanence of the spirits of the dead in the patient, and I have been assured on more than one occasion that they may be driven out by noisome medicines, simply, it is said, because they cannot endure the smell. The object of the *jura* fumigation, therefore, seems to be to drive out the malignant spirits; and (although I have not noted whether it possessed any strong smell) the ceremonial *suna* may possibly be used with the same idea. The novices during their true initiation in the *embahi* ceremony, and during their subsequent seclusion and association with the flutes and bull-roarer, have been in intimate association with the spirits of the dead—*sovai*, *embahi*, or *siango*. The fact that there is a vast deal of sham in the whole cycle of ceremonies does not altogether preclude a belief that the *embahi* are really present. As we have observed, make-believe and true

[1] See p. 297. The word is sometimes given to the ceremonial rite which I have called *suna* throughout, but I have not heard the word *suna* given to the 'medical' process.

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belief seem with the native to merge into one another: they are too near extremes between which he may be said to shilly-shally. Therefore, when the time comes to be done with the ceremony for good and all, he takes the precaution of removing by a final purificatory rite all possible influences for evil which the *embabi* may have left in the initiates. The same explanation, it may be noted, is offered for the various rites, including the *suna*, observed by the man-slayer, who must rid himself of the peculiarly malignant spirit of the man he has slain.

The Otobu. It remains now to say something further of the *otobu*. I have already referred to the homicidal *otobu*, or *esa*, in Chapter XI, and described the rites observed in the bestowal of the ordinary *otobu* in the present chapter. It is now our task to consider the meaning—or the various meanings—of the word. The *otobu* may for the present be defined as one of a number of distinctive ornaments or objects which, at a price, are ceremonially bestowed, and which the recipient is thenceforward entitled to wear or use. It will be understood that any one who was, so to speak, masquerading with an *otobu* would be exposed to obloquy or ridicule. In earlier days it is doubtful whether any man would have had the hardihood or folly to attempt it. Where, therefore, one sees a man holding a highly ornamented lime gourd with a shell mouth-piece, or a string bag decorated with dogs' teeth, or wearing cuscus streamers tied at intervals with bunches of feathers, it may be concluded that he has paid the price for them (or probably that the price has been paid in his behalf) and that he is fully entitled to their use.

There is a considerable variety of these ceremonial objects, e.g. a specially ornamented *bo* or string bag (*eti* or *betava*), decorated spears or stone clubs, bone forks for eating, lime-pots, belts embroidered with *saima* shells or made of black creeper cord, cuscus streamers, &c. More commonly they take the form of ornaments (*bambo*) for the breast or forehead—hornbill beaks set in a half-circle, *gana*, *buave*, *bono*, and the like (*vide* p. 39). They are always fine examples of their kind, and in some cases are extremely

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girls who ended their seclusion together go down on foot to the river. Here they were washed by a number of older women, who engaged in a boisterous water-fight, and then all returned in a body dancing and singing extremely indecent songs.

After this bath at day-break the remainder of the morning is given to decorating the girl. Her skin is oiled again, the hair is shaved back a little from her forehead (merely for effect, I believe), and she is bedecked with feathers and ornaments.

The actual début of the girl, or in many cases of the girls, is made with some little dramatic effect. They have been brought together in one house, before which is set up a screen of palm-leaves with an opening or gateway concealed behind curtains of bark-cloth. When all is in readiness, the curtains are drawn apart and reveal the girls standing abreast, with a young man on either flank, apparently as escort. The girls are armed with spears or pineapple clubs; and in one hand they may carry a bunch of ripe betel-nuts, or a new-painted *bo*, rolled up, which will presently serve as a dancer's shawl. The striking feature of their make-up is the *bo* or bark-cloth skirt which they are actually wearing. This is of plain bark-cloth, unornamented save for splashes or smears of red; and in front and rear it has a hole which purports to expose their genitalia to the view of the onlookers. Thus attired the young women move slowly and in silence across the village and sit in a row on a log which their escorts have procured for them. After remaining some ten minutes on the log they rise and seat themselves on a coco-nut mat (*tere*) spread on the ground; and then after another ten minutes or so they rise once more and mingle with their friends. They will subsequently join in the dance which has been organized for the occasion, and they will not discard their ornaments till sunset. The ceremony has not ended until they eat the purificatory stew called *suna*, and steam their bodies over it.

I have never succeeded in obtaining any satisfactory explanation for the details of this procedure, i.e. the weapons, the betel-nuts, &c. The perforation of the *bo* is to the native

3: Reay E-4, 5 (1951) 1953 OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

threatening that she would never again let him come to her breast. But as a rule the biting lesson seems to be learned easily, and mothers appear to have very little trouble with children biting them during the prolonged lactation.

The second conflict situation is the one induced by the adult men deliberately provoking fright in the small boy. The boy has to grow up to be fearless. Before the pacification of the Orokaiva and the surrounding tribes, this was part of the training of boys to be warriors. Ultimately, after being frightened by the men quite frequently over a couple of years or so, the boy is no longer afraid. But, in the meantime, his world is uncertain and conflicting. He learns to keep close to his father, so that he can rush to him if someone frightens him, and this association with his father continues long after he overcomes his fear of strange men making strange noises. It does not seem to occur to the child to run for comfort in these circumstances to his mother.

Initiation into Adulthood.

The initiatory rites are clearly divided into three major parts—the terror, the seclusion and the investiture. The initiation of a girl does not encompass all of these. At puberty she is secluded for a time, and then goes through a little purificatory ritual before ceremonially emerging from her seclusion. She does not have to endure the terror.

What I have termed "the terror" is what F. E. Williams refers to as the "initiation ceremony proper."[5] After being secluded for a short time, the candidates emerge and are shown the bullroarers and sacred flutes. Then the *embahi* (malevolent spirits) appear to them by moonlight and chase them around the village. The boys' parents cry out to the spirits to spare their children and not to devour them, but the *embahi* rush around crying out, "Kambo, kambo, kambo!" (Bite, bite, bite!). The boys are well aware that the *embahi* are a sham, and that they are really only fellow-villagers in disguise, but they are terrified none the less. Eventually, the *embahi* allow the boys' parents to overpower them and chase them from the village.

After they have undergone the "terror," the boys are secluded in the *oro* ("men's house"). ". . . During this period, they are instructed to be honest, obliging and diligent." They learn to play the flutes, and they plait armlets; otherwise they are inactive. Food is served to them by some old men. The boy's *nobo* (mother's brother), who has appeared as one of the *embahi* then returns to the village, divested of his frightening make-up, to lead the boy to the *oro* for his seclusion, and is responsible for feeding him during this period.

The final phase of the initiation is the boy's emergence from his seclusion. Like the girl on her emergence, he goes through a purificatory ritual. Then he is fitted with the *hokumbari* (feather headdresses), the wearing of which is a demonstration of his manhood. Again, it is the *nobo* (mother's brother) who presents him with the

[5] *Orokaiva Society*, p. 180, also pp. 181–192.